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WORKING MOTHERS AND THE NEED FOR CHILD CARE SERVICES.
WOMENS BUREAU, WASHINGTON, D.C. (DEPT. OF LABOR)

PUB DATE MAY 67

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.25 HC-$1.04 24P.

DESCRIPTORS- *WORKING WOMEN, *MOTHERS, *CHILD CARE, STATISTICAL DATA, NATIONAL SURVEYS, AGE, FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS, FAMILY INCOME,

DATA AND CHARTS DOCUMENT THE RISING NUMBER OF WORKING MOTHERS IN THE UNITED STATES TODAY AND THE INCREASING NEED FOR CHILD CARE SERVICES. DATA WERE OBTAINED FROM U.S. DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, COMMERCE, AND HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE. NEARLY 10 MILLION MOTHERS WITH CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE WERE WORKERS IN MARCH 1966. MORE THAN ONE OF THREE MOTHERS WAS A WORKER IN MAY 1967. IT IS CONSERVATIVELY ESTIMATED THAT BY 1980, 5.3 MILLION MOTHERS 20 TO 44 YEARS OF AGE WITH CHILDREN UNDER 5 YEARS OF AGE WILL BE WORKERS -- A 43 PERCENT INCREASE OVER 1970. MORE THAN 17 MILLION CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE HAD WORKING MOTHERS IN MARCH 1965. OF THESE CHILDREN, 4.5 MILLION WERE UNDER SIX YEARS OF AGE. IN FEBRUARY 1965, A NATIONAL SURVEY OF 6.1 MILLION MOTHERS WHO WORKED 27 WEEKS OR MORE IN 1964 WAS MADE TO ASCERTAIN HOW THE CHILDREN OF WORKING MOTHERS WERE CARED FOR. FINDINGS WERE (1) NEARLY HALF WERE CARED FOR IN THEIR OWN HOMES BY THEIR FATHERS, OTHER RELATIVES, BABYSITTERS, OR HOUSEKEEPERS, (2) 28 PERCENT WERE CARED FOR BY THEIR MOTHERS WHO EITHER WORKED ONLY DURING THEIR CHILDREN'S SCHOOL HOURS OR TOOK CARE OF THEM WHILE WORKING, (3) 18 PERCENT WERE CARED FOR AWAY FROM HOME, AND (4) 8 PERCENT LOOKED AFTER THEMSELVES. TOO MANY CHILDREN HAD EITHER QUESTIONABLE OR COMPLETELY INADEQUATE CARE. (PS)

ED014580

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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WORKING MOTHERS AND THE NEED FOR CHILD CARE SERVICES

U.S. Department of Labor

Women's Bureau
May 1967

VT003661

U.S. DEPARTMENT QF LABOR
WOMEN'S BUREAU
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20210

WORKING MOTHERS AND THE NEED FOR CHILD CARE SERVICES

There were nearly 27 million working women 14 years of age and over in the United States in March 1966, 1/ and their number is rising steadily. Among these workers were 9.9 million mothers with children under 18 years of age. Nearly 2.1 million of these mothers had children under 3 years of age; 1.7 million had children 3 to 5 years of age (none under 3); and almost 6.1 million had children 6 to 17 years of age (none under 6). Almost 1.5 million (15 percent) of the working mothers were nonwhite.

The number of working mothers has increased more than sixfold since 1940, when there were 1.5 million and has more than doubled since 1950, when there were 4.6 million.

The employment of mothers, like the employment of all women, is expected to continue to rise. The Bureau of Labor Statistics has conservatively estimated that the number of working mothers 20 to 44 years of age with preschool children will increase to 5.3 million by 1980.

To ascertain how the children of working mothers are cared for, in February 1965 the Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and the Women's Bureau cosponsored a national survey of the child care arrangements made by these mothers. The survey was limited to the 6.1 million mothers who worked 27 weeks or more in 1964, either full time or part time, and who had at least one child under 14 years of age living at home. These mothers had 12.3 million children under 14 years of age--3.8 million, under 6 years; 6.1 million, 6 to 11 years; and 2.4 million, 12 and 13 years. The survey disclosed that nearly half (46 percent) of these children were cared for in their own homes by their fathers or other relatives, or by babysitters or housekeepers; 28 percent were cared for by their mothers, who either worked only during their children's school hours or took care of them while working; 18 percent were cared for away from home (only 2 percent in group care); and 8 percent looked after themselves. Less than 4 percent of the children who looked after themselves were under 6 years of age, and nearly half were 12 and 13 years of age.

Too many children have care which at best would be classified as questionable, and all too frequently would be considered completely inadequate.

1/ This is the latest date for which data are available on the marital status of workers.

President Johnson, in a recent message to Congress, stated:

> Ignorance, ill health, personality disorder--these are disabilities often contracted in childhood: afflictions which linger to cripple the man and damage the next generation.
>
> Our nation must rid itself of this bitter inheritance. Our goal must be clear--to give every child the chance to fulfill his promise.

To meet this goal the President urged the provision of day care services for children under 3 years of age; expansion of training programs for day care counselors, parent advisers, and health visitors; and expansion of day care and homemaker services in State child welfare programs.

Child care services should be available to every child who needs them. Good day care is especially important for younger children whose mothers must work for economic reasons, and for children who are economically and culturally deprived, those with physical or mental handicaps, and those whose mothers are incapacitated.

The following summary statements and charts document the rising number of working mothers in the United States today and the increasing need for child care services. It is hoped that they will prove helpful in the intensified efforts now underway to provide, expand, and improve day care services throughout the country.

Mary Dublin Keyserling
Director, Women's Bureau

More Than 1 Out of 3 Mothers Is a Worker Today

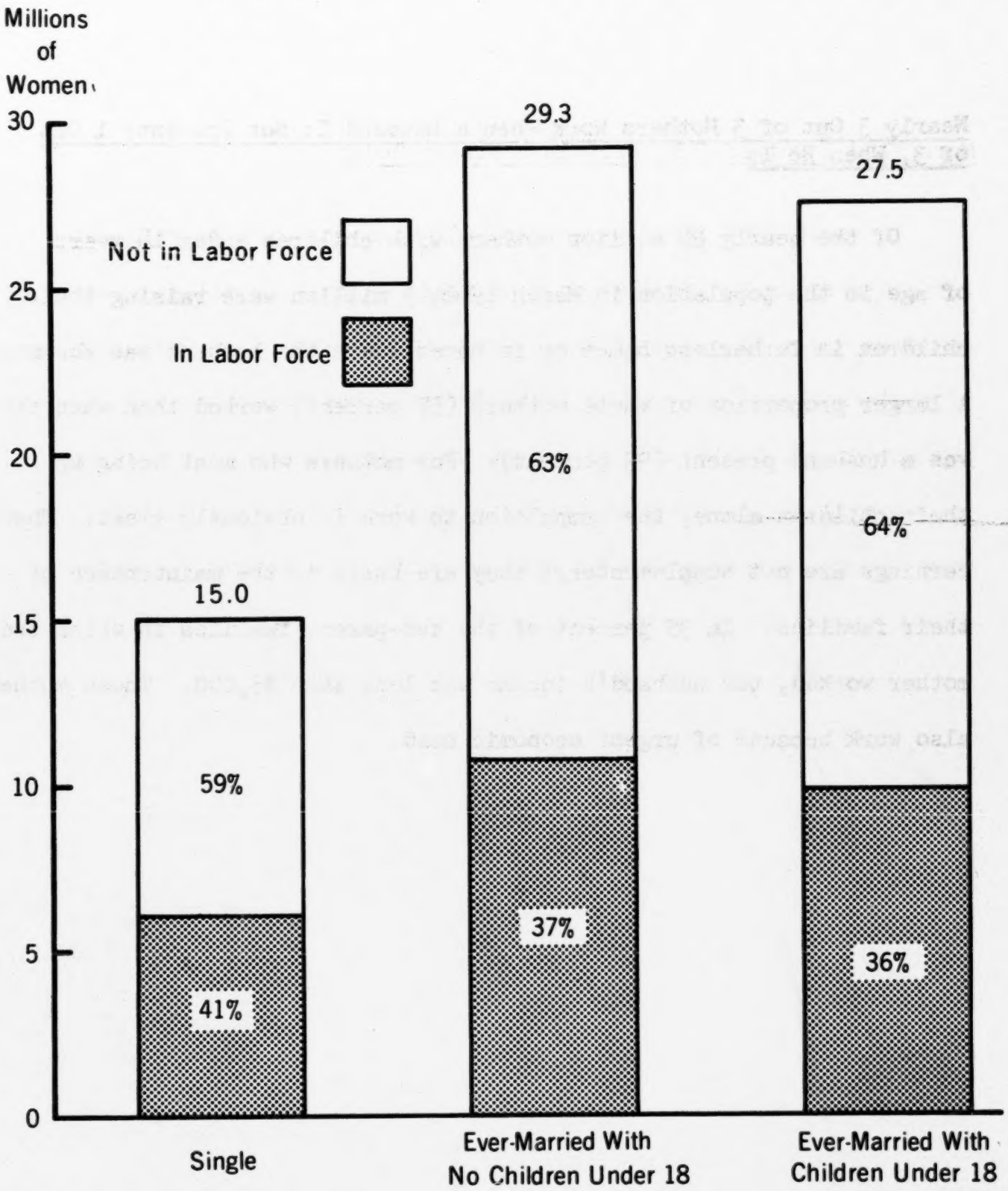
In March 1966 there were nearly 72 million women 14 years of age and over in the population. Of these, almost 28 million had children under 18 years of age. More than one-third (9.9 million) of these mothers were in the labor force. They constituted 37 percent of all women workers. Most of these mothers were working to raise family income above poverty levels or to bring family income closer to standards of modest adequacy, now defined as about $7,000 a year for an urban family of four.

CHART 1.

MORE THAN 1 OUT OF 3 MOTHERS IS A WORKER TODAY

(LABOR FORCE STATUS OF WOMEN IN THE POPULATION, BY MARITAL STATUS AND PRESENCE OF CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE, MARCH 1966)

(WOMEN 14 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER)



SOURCE: SEE PAGE 24.

Nearly 3 Out of 5 Mothers Work When a Husband Is Not Present; 1 Out of 3, When He Is

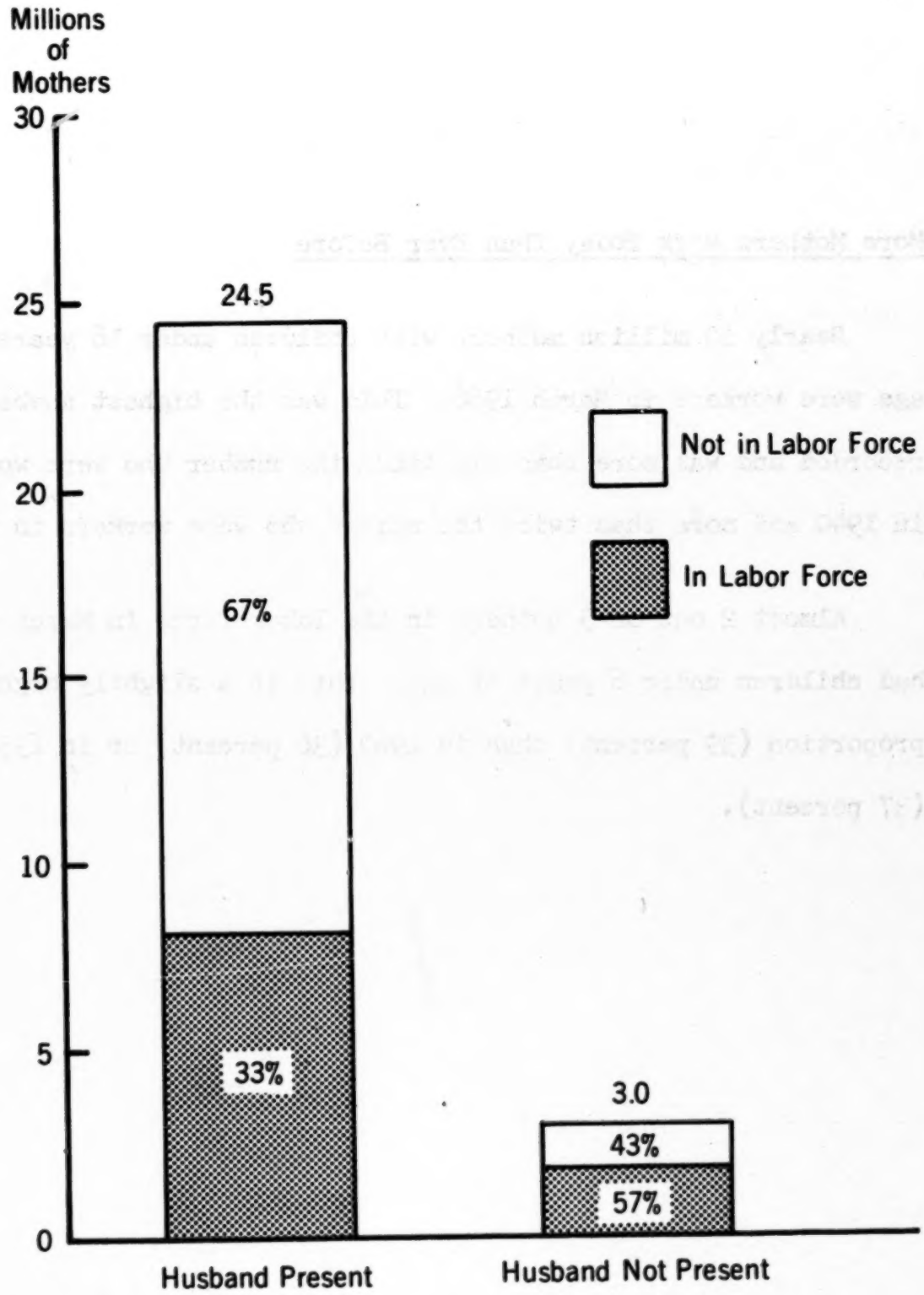
Of the nearly 28 million mothers with children under 18 years of age in the population in March 1966, 3 million were raising their children in fatherless homes or in homes where the husband was absent. A larger proportion of these mothers (57 percent) worked than when there was a husband present (33 percent). For mothers who must bring up their children alone, the compulsion to work is obviously great. Their earnings are not supplementary; they are basic to the maintenance of their families. In 35 percent of the two-parent families in which the mother worked, the husband's income was less than $5,000. These mothers also work because of urgent economic need.

CHART 2.

NEARLY 3 OUT OF 5 MOTHERS WORK WHEN A HUSBAND IS NOT PRESENT; 1 OUT OF 3, WHEN HE IS

(LABOR FORCE STATUS OF MOTHERS WITH CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE, BY PRESENCE OF HUSBAND, MARCH 1966)

(MOTHERS 14 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER)



SOURCE: SEE PAGE 24.

More Mothers Work Today Than Ever Before

Nearly 10 million mothers with children under 18 years of age were workers in March 1966. This was the highest number ever recorded and was more than six times the number who were workers in 1940 and more than twice the number who were workers in 1950.

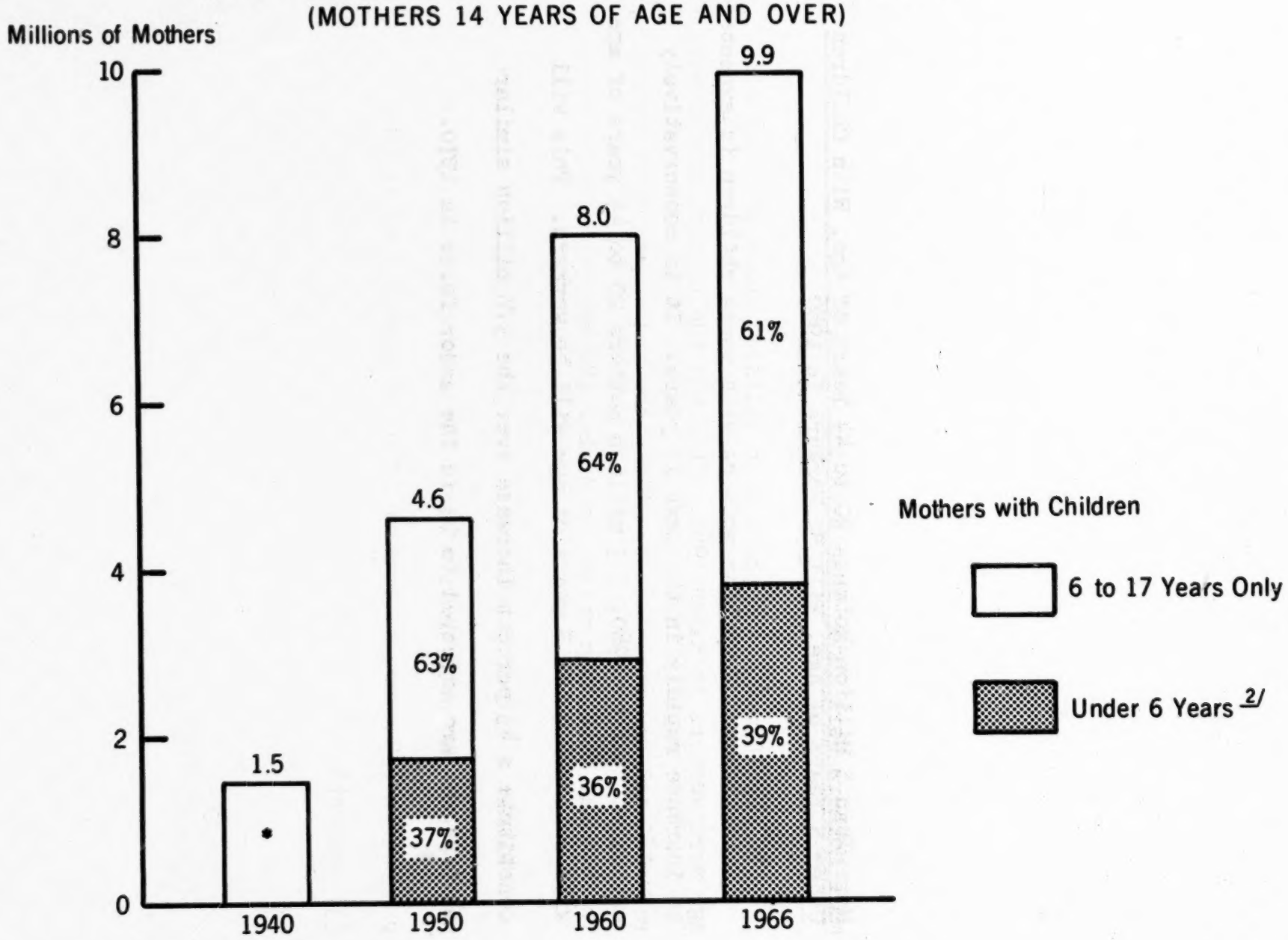
Almost 2 out of 5 mothers in the labor force in March 1966 had children under 6 years of age. This is a slightly higher proportion (39 percent) than in 1960 (36 percent) or in 1950 (37 percent).

CHART 3.

MORE MOTHERS WORK TODAY THAN EVER BEFORE

(MOTHERS IN THE LABOR FORCE, BY AGE OF CHILDREN, 1940-66) 1/

(MOTHERS 14 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER)



* AGES OF CHILDREN NOT AVAILABLE.

1/ DATA ARE FOR MARCH OF EACH YEAR.

2/ MAY ALSO HAVE OLDER CHILDREN.

SOURCE: SEE PAGE 24.

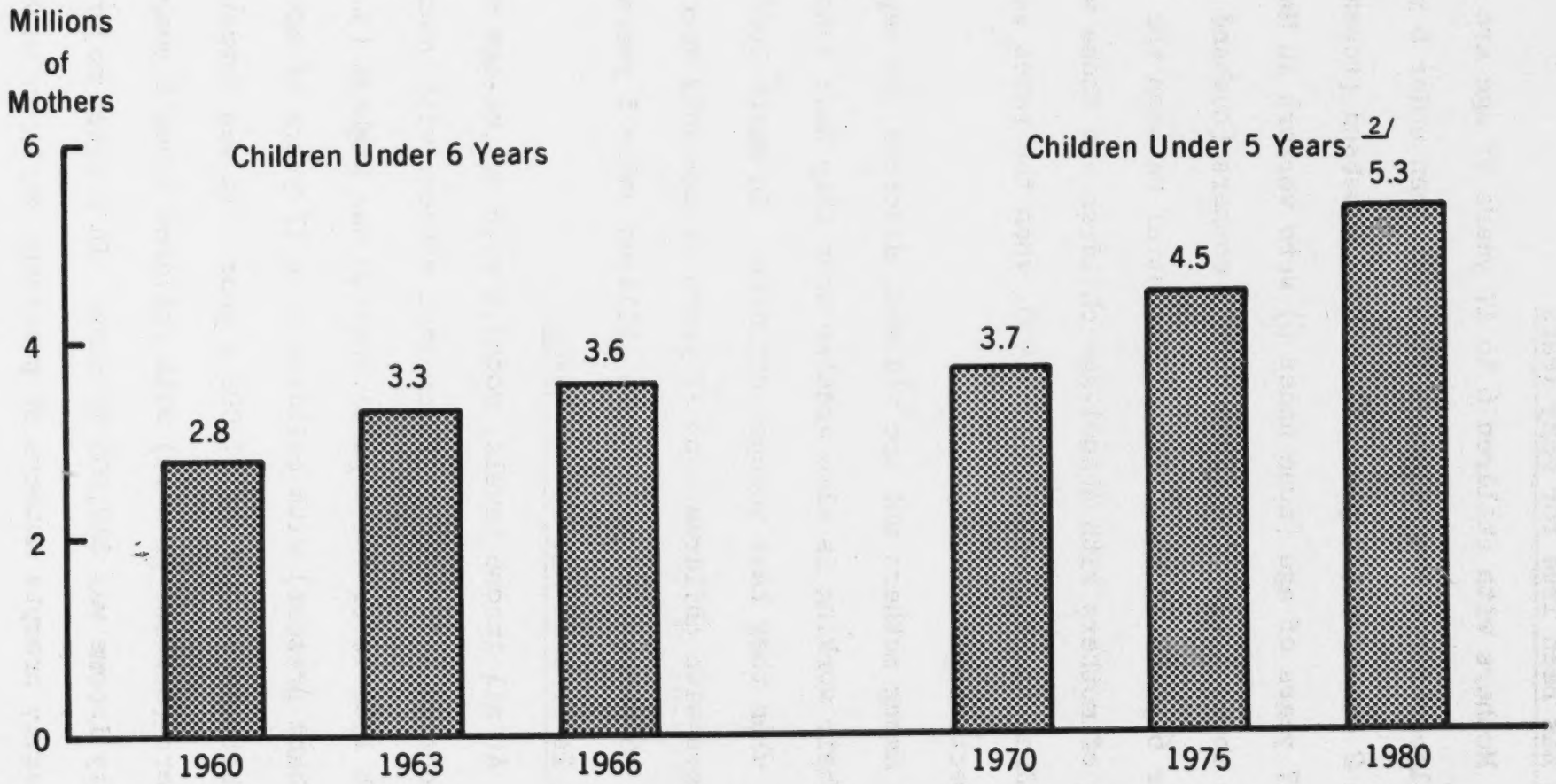
More Than 5 Million Mothers 20 to 44 Years of Age, With Children Under 5 Years of Age, Will Be Workers in 1980

The number of working mothers with young children is expected to increase rapidly in the next 15 years. It is conservatively estimated that by 1980, 5.3 million mothers 20 to 44 years of age with children under 5 years of age will be workers. This will constitute a 43 percent increase over the 3.7 million similar mothers who are expected to be in the labor force in 1970.

CHART 4.

MORE THAN 5 MILLION MOTHERS 20 TO 44 YEARS OF AGE, WITH CHILDREN UNDER 5 YEARS OF AGE, WILL BE WORKERS IN 1980

(LABOR FORCE STATUS OF MOTHERS 20 TO 44 YEARS OF AGE, WITH CHILDREN UNDER 6 YEARS, 1960-66, 1/ AND CHILDREN UNDER 5 YEARS, PROJECTED TO 1980)



1/ DATA ARE FOR MARCH OF EACH YEAR.
2/ PROJECTIONS NOT AVAILABLE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 6 YEARS.

SOURCE: SEE PAGE 24.

Mothers With School-Age Children Are More Likely To Work Than Mothers With Younger Children

This Has Been True for Many Years

Mothers with children 6 to 17 years of age are more likely to be in the labor force than mothers with children under 6 years of age. More than 2 out of 5 (44 percent) mothers (husband present) with children 6 to 17 years of age (none under 6) were workers in March 1966 as compared with about 1 out of 4 (24 percent) mothers (husband present) with children under 6 years of age. The differential between the labor force participation of mothers with school-age children and those with preschool-age children has increased since 1950, when the rates were 28 and 12 percent, respectively.

Among mothers who are widowed, divorced, or separated, the likelihood of their working is also greater when they have school-age children only than when they have younger children. In March 1966, 66 percent of these mothers with children 6 to 17 years of age only were working as compared with 46 percent of those with children under 6 years of age.

This Is True at All Income Levels

At all income levels, mothers with school-age children show a greater attachment to the labor force than mothers with younger children. In March 1966 labor force participation was highest (50 percent) among mothers (husband present) with children 6 to 17 years of age when the family income was between $3,000 and $7,000 a year. It was lowest (12 percent) among mothers (husband present) with children under 6 years of age when the family income was $10,000 or more. In a great majority of cases economic necessity prompts mothers of preschool children to work.

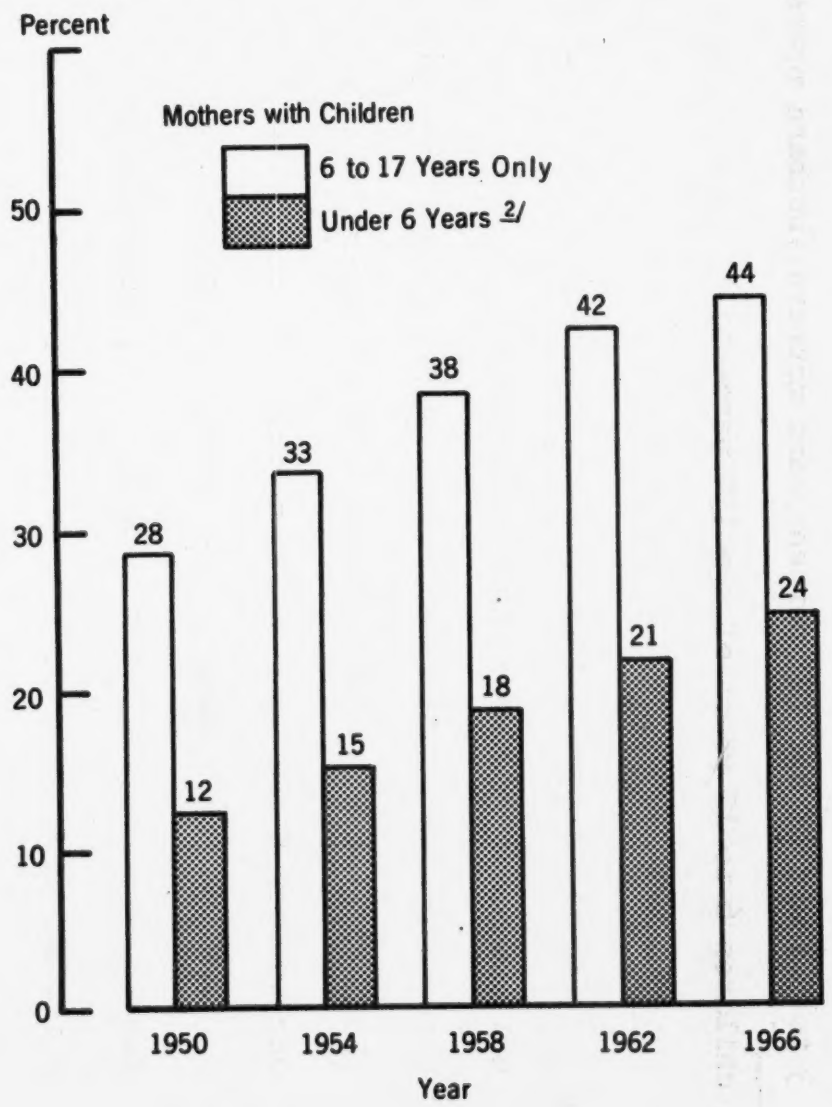
Information is not available on the family income of mothers who are widowed, divorced, or separated.

CHART 5.

MOTHERS WITH SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN ARE MORE LIKELY TO WORK THAN MOTHERS WITH YOUNGER CHILDREN

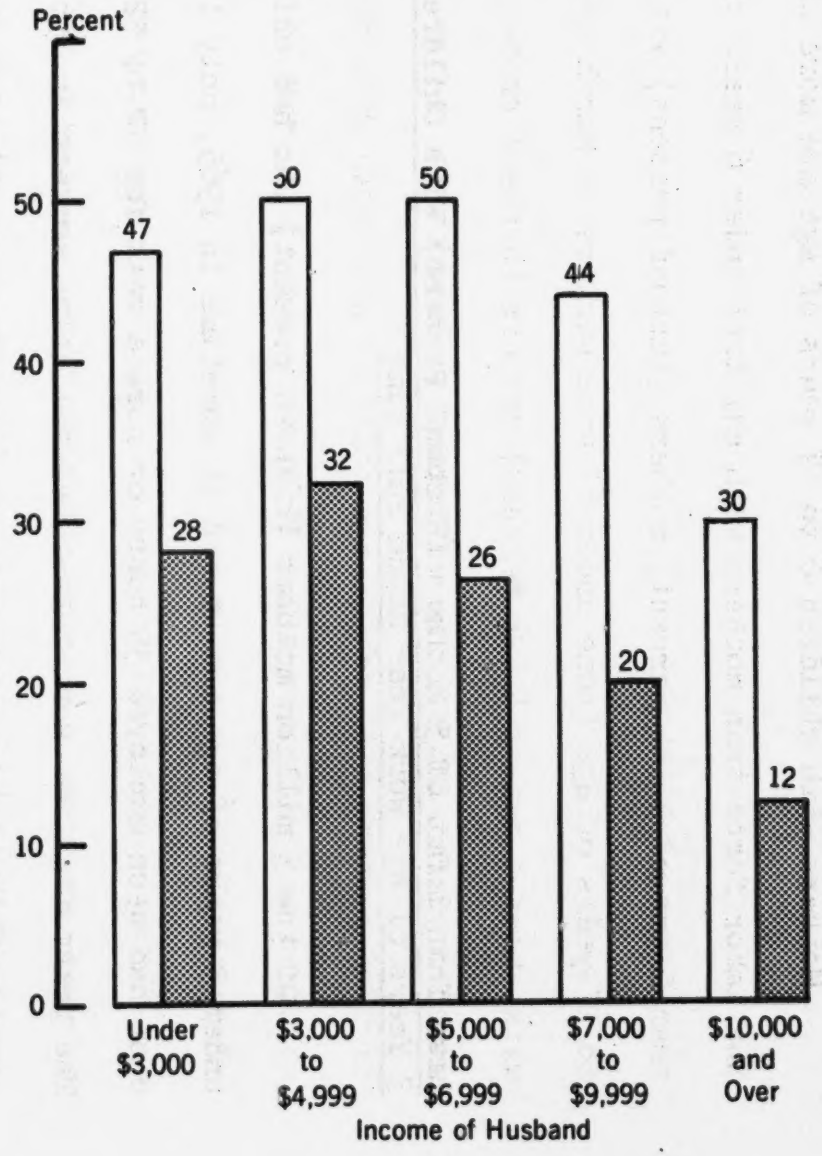
THIS HAS BEEN TRUE FOR MANY YEARS

(LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION OF MOTHERS WITH HUSBAND PRESENT, BY AGE OF CHILDREN, 1950-66) 1/



THIS IS TRUE AT ALL INCOME LEVELS

(LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION OF MOTHERS WITH HUSBAND PRESENT, BY INCOME OF HUSBAND AND AGE OF CHILDREN, MARCH 1966)



1/ DATA ARE FOR MARCH OF EACH YEAR, EXCEPT 1954 (APRIL).

2/ MAY ALSO HAVE OLDER CHILDREN.

SOURCE: SEE PAGE 24.

Less Than 1 Out of 5 Mothers (Husband Present) With Children Under 3 Years of Age Work Year Round Full Time

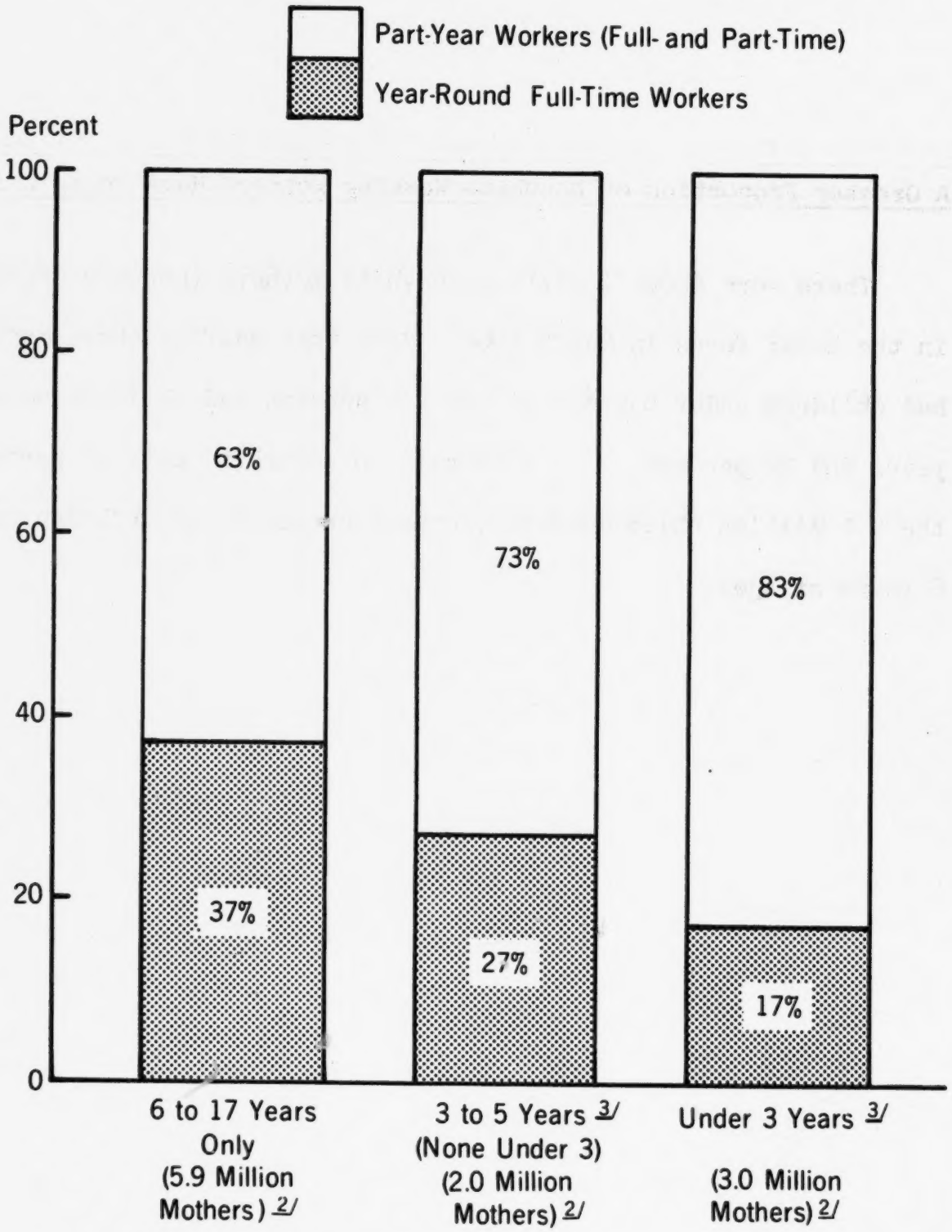
Of the 3 million mothers (husband present) who had children under 3 years of age and worked at sometime in 1965, only 17 percent had been employed 35 hours or more a week for 50 to 52 weeks. The percentage who were year-round full-time workers in 1965 was considerably higher among mothers (husband present) with children 3 to 5 years of age (27 percent) and mothers (husband present) with children 6 to 17 years of age (37 percent).

CHART 6.

LESS THAN 1 OUT OF 5 MOTHERS (HUSBAND PRESENT) WITH CHILDREN UNDER 3 YEARS OF AGE WORK YEAR ROUND FULL TIME 1/

(WORK EXPERIENCE IN 1965 OF MOTHERS WITH HUSBAND PRESENT, BY AGE OF CHILDREN, MARCH 1966)

(MOTHERS 14 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER)



1/ 50 TO 52 WEEKS. 35 HOURS OR MORE A WEEK.
2/ ESTIMATED.
3/ MAY ALSO HAVE OLDER CHILDREN.

SOURCE: SEE PAGE 24.

A Greater Proportion of Nonwhite Working Mothers Have Young Children

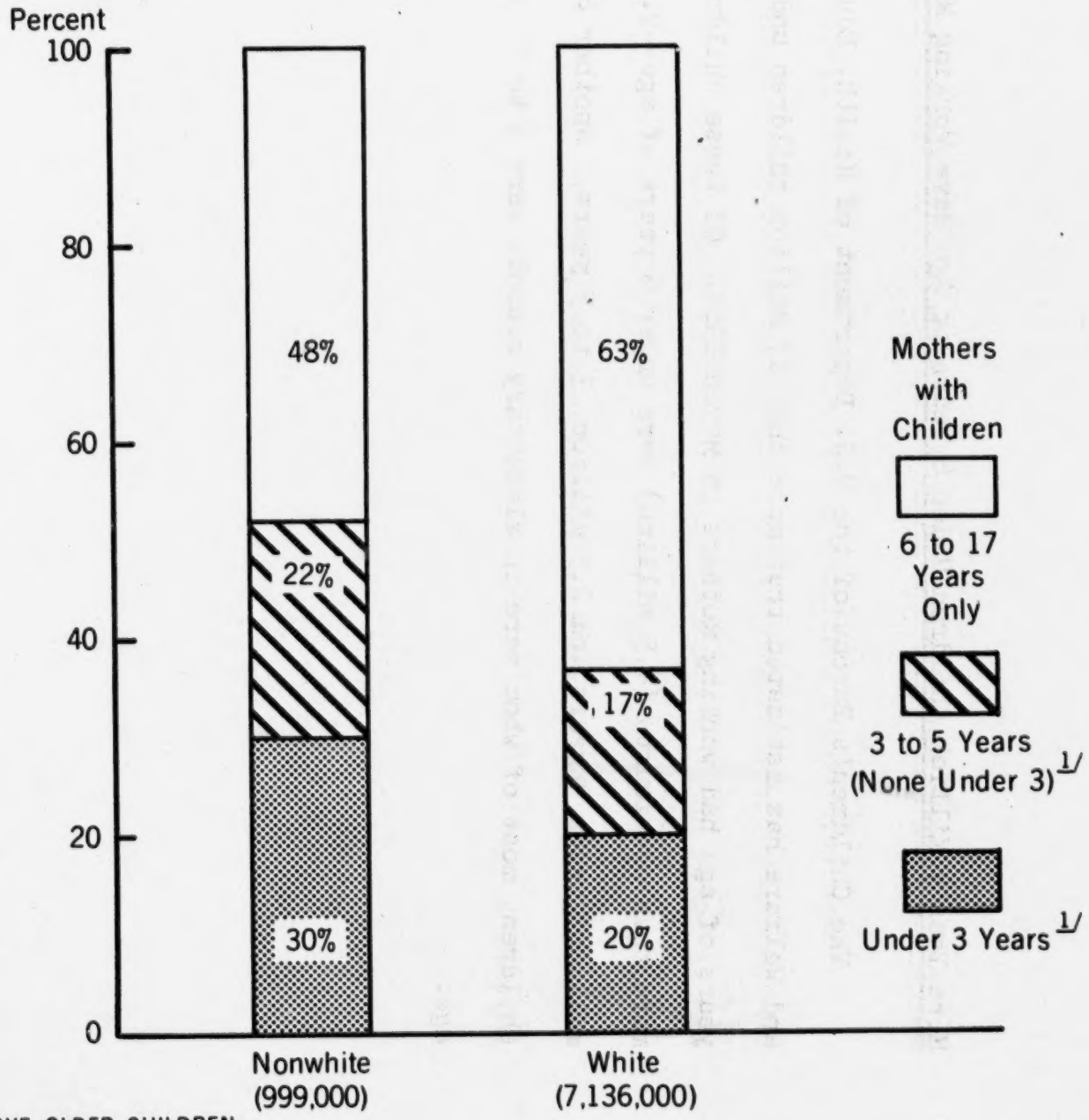
There were about 1 million nonwhite mothers (husband present) in the labor force in March 1966. More than half of these mothers had children under 6 years of age--30 percent had children under 3 years and 22 percent, 3 to 5 years. In contrast, only 37 percent of the 7.1 million white mothers (husband present) had children under 6 years of age.

CHART 7.

A GREATER PROPORTION OF NONWHITE WORKING MOTHERS HAVE YOUNG CHILDREN

(MOTHERS IN THE LABOR FORCE, WITH HUSBAND PRESENT, BY AGE OF CHILDREN AND COLOR, MARCH 1966)

(MOTHERS 14 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER)



1/ MAY ALSO HAVE OLDER CHILDREN.

SOURCE: SEE PAGE 24.

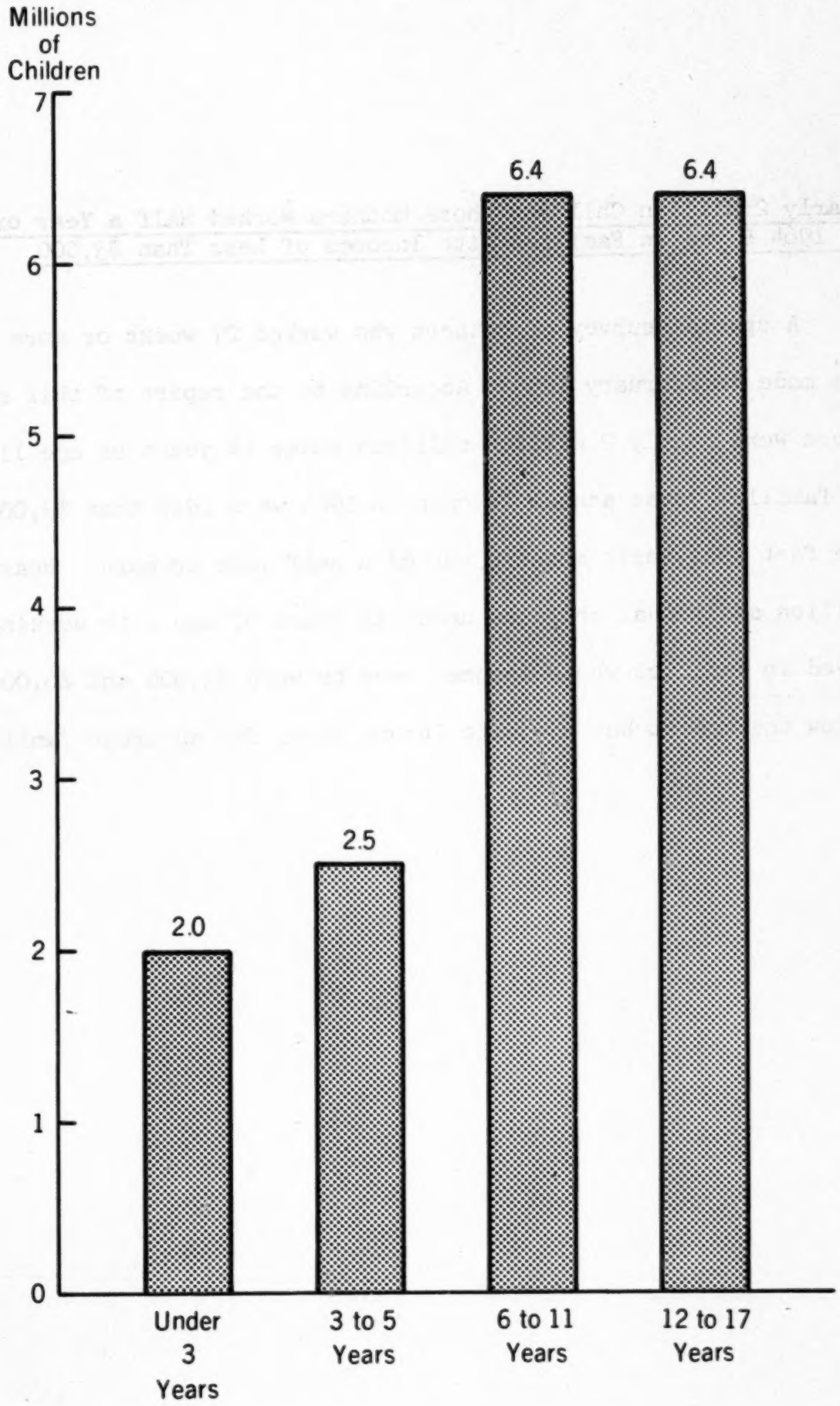
More Than 4 Million Children Under 6 Years of Age Have Working Mothers

The Children's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare has estimated that more than 17 million children under 18 years of age had working mothers in March 1965. Of these children, more than one-fourth (4.5 million) were under 6 years of age--2.0 million, under 3 years and 2.5 million, 3 to 5 years. Another 6.4 million children, most of whom were in elementary school, were 6 to 11 years of age.

CHART 8.

MORE THAN 4 MILLION CHILDREN UNDER 6 YEARS OF AGE HAVE WORKING MOTHERS

(NUMBER OF CHILDREN OF WORKING MOTHERS. BY AGE. MARCH 1965)



SOURCE: SEE PAGE 24.

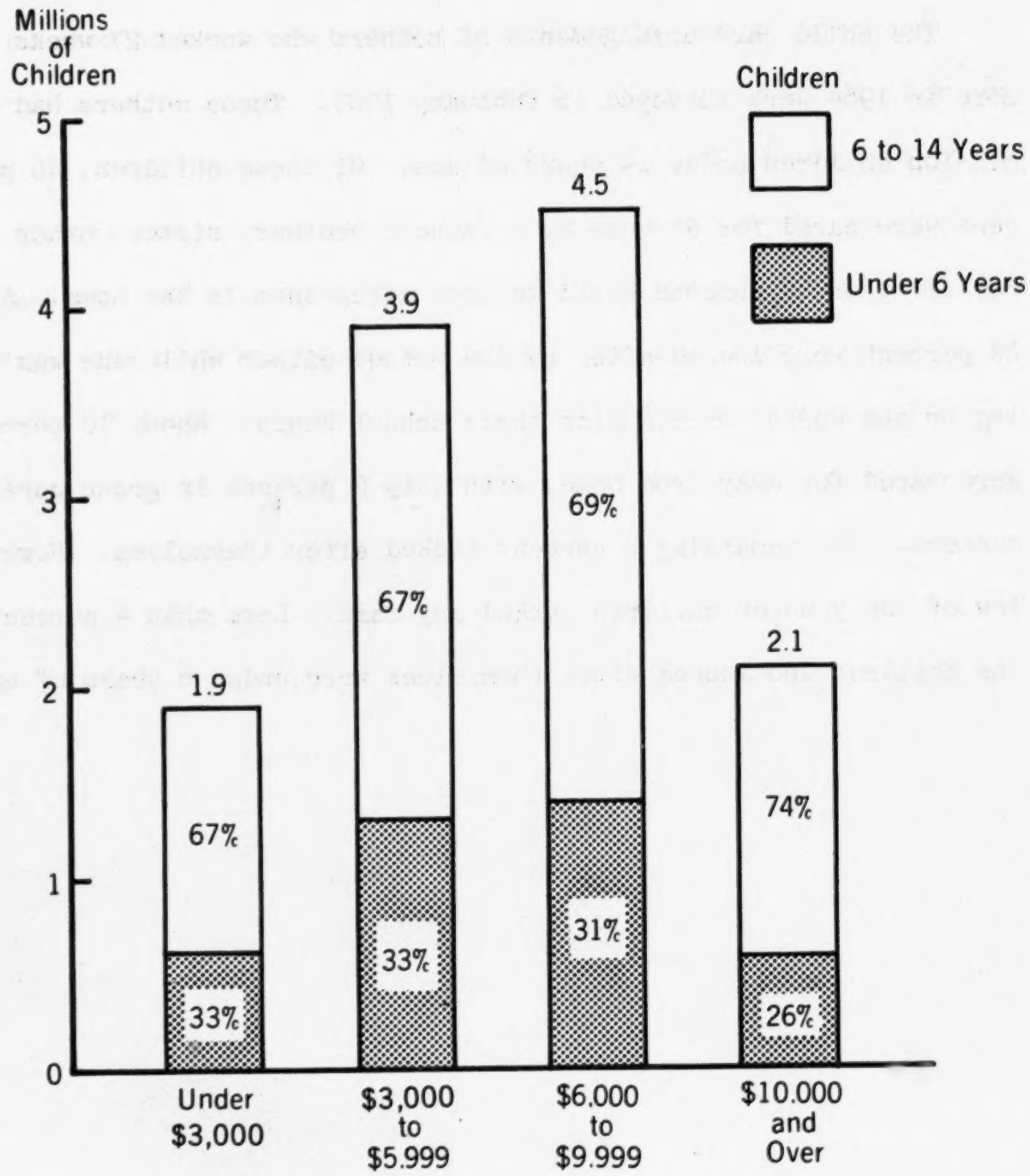
Nearly 2 Million Children Whose Mothers Worked Half a Year or More in 1964 Lived in Families With Incomes of Less Than $3,000

A special survey of mothers who worked 27 weeks or more in 1964 was made in February 1965. According to the report of this survey there were nearly 2 million children under 14 years of age living in families whose annual incomes in 1964 were less than $3,000, despite the fact that their mothers worked a half year or more. Nearly 4 million additional children under 14 years of age with working mothers lived in families whose incomes were between $3,000 and $6,000--still below the modest but adequate income level for an urban family of four.

CHART 9.

NEARLY 2 MILLION CHILDREN WHOSE MOTHERS WORKED HALF A YEAR OR MORE IN 1964 LIVED IN FAMILIES WITH INCOMES OF LESS THAN $3,000

(NUMBER OF CHILDREN OF MOTHERS WHO WORKED 27 WEEKS OR MORE IN 1964. BY FAMILY INCOME IN 1964. AND AGE OF CHILDREN. FEBRUARY 1965)



SOURCE: SEE PAGE 24.

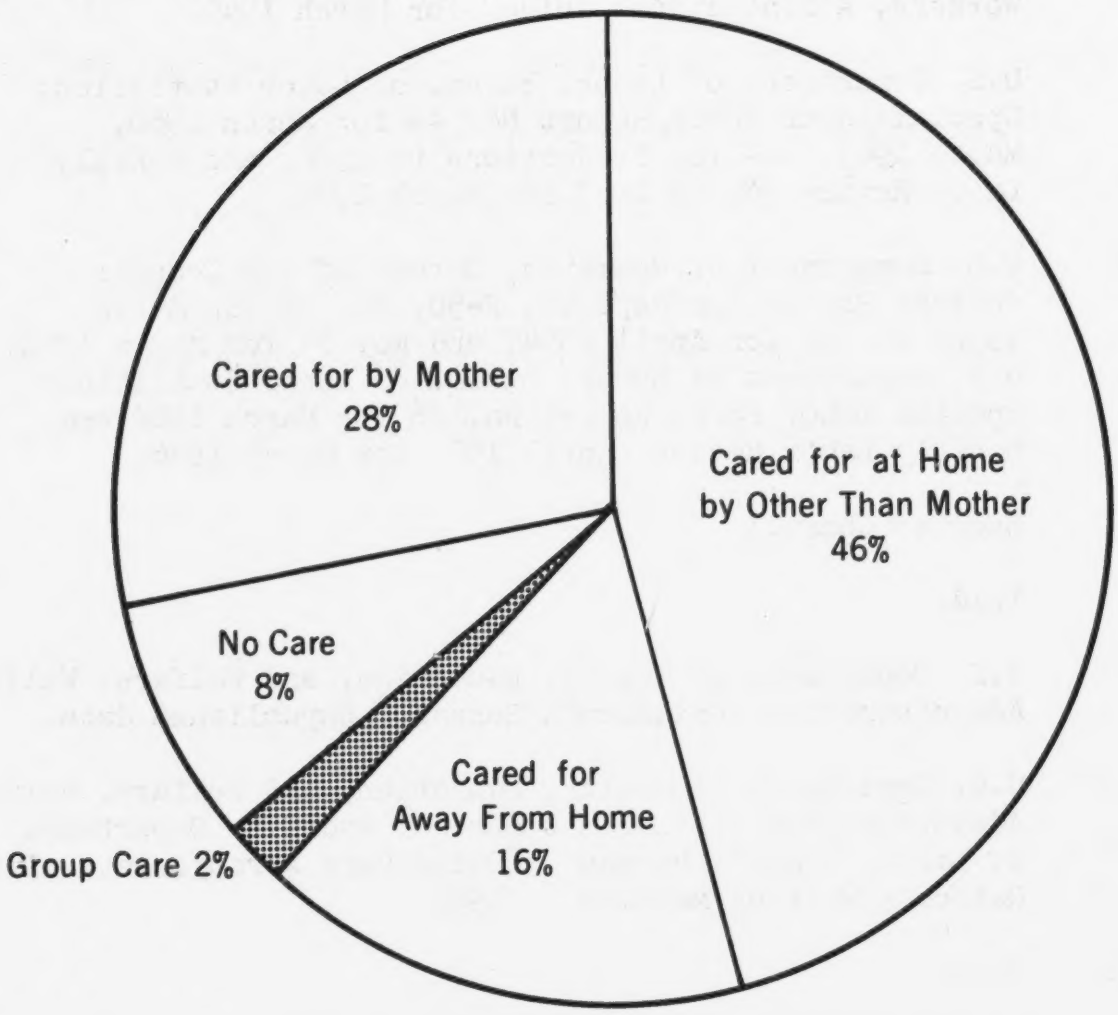
Too Many Children of Working Mothers Lack Good Child Care Services

The child care arrangements of mothers who worked 27 weeks or more in 1964 were surveyed in February 1965. These mothers had 12.3 million children under 14 years of age. Of these children, 46 percent were cared for at home by a father, brother, sister, other relative, or by someone hired to look after them in the home. Another 28 percent were looked after by the mother either while she was working or she worked only during their school hours. About 18 percent were cared for away from home, with only 2 percent in group care centers. The remaining 8 percent looked after themselves. However, few of the younger children lacked any care. Less than 4 percent of the children who looked after themselves were under 6 years of age.

CHART 10.

TOO MANY CHILDREN OF WORKING MOTHERS LACK GOOD CHILD CARE SERVICES

(CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS OF WORKING MOTHERS, FEBRUARY 1965)



12.3 MILLION CHILDREN UNDER 14 YEARS OF AGE

SOURCE: SEE PAGE 24.

Chart Sources

Chart 1. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics: Monthly Labor Review, April 1967.

Chart 2. Ibid.

Chart 3. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census: Current Population Reports, P-50, No. 29 for March 1950; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics: Special Labor Force Report No. 13 for March 1960 and Monthly Labor Review, April 1967 for March 1966; and Women's Bureau, "Women as Workers, A Statistical Guide" for March 1940.

Chart 4. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics: Special Labor Force Report No. 49 for March 1960, March 1963, and for Projections to 1980; and Monthly Labor Review, April 1967 for March 1966.

Chart 5. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census: Current Population Reports, P-50, No. 29 for March 1950, No. 62 for April 1954, and No. 87 for March 1958; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics: Special Labor Force Report No. 26 for March 1962 and Monthly Labor Review, April 1967 for March 1966.

Chart 6. Same as Chart 1.

Chart 7. Ibid.

Chart 8. U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Welfare Administration, Children's Bureau. Unpublished data.

Chart 9. U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Welfare Administration, Children's Bureau; and U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau: "Child Care Arrangements of the Nation's Working Mothers." 1965.

Chart 10. Ibid.

Labor D.C. (WB 67-298)